



INSIDE PEO STRI

J U L Y 2 0 0 7

IN THIS ISSUE

STRI Implements Revised Time Keeping Procedure ... Page 6

Military, Industry Collaborate at TSIS in Orlando ... Page 7

Save More Money in Unconventional Ways ... Page 10

Zarbo Offers Departing Words, Heads to War College ... Page 12

WORTH REPEATING

“What we do see from the Iraqis is a commitment to continue to improve and a desire and a passion to be more responsible for all things military. They very much want to be able to do this themselves.”

— *Brig. Gen. Terry Wolff, commander of the Coalition Military Assistance Training Team*

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

By Kristen Dooley, *Public Affairs Specialist*

Newly amended mission and vision statements guide the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI). The agency’s senior leaders met June 1 to chart the course for the organization in accordance with PEO STRI’s expanded charter, increased responsibility from the assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology, and recent contracting authority.

“Our vision and mission statements set the parameters for the organization in terms of who we are, where we are going and what we want to be,” said Joe A. Giunta, strategic integrator for PEO STRI.

The organization’s new mission statement keeps the U.S. military the primary focus of the PEO and also strives to support the entire country as it pertains to training and testing in the defense realm. PEO STRI’s mission is “to provide responsive interoperable simulation, training, and testing solutions and acquisition services for the Warfighters and the Nation.”

Much like the revised mission, PEO STRI’s new vision statement encompasses a broader sphere to highlight the agency’s increased authority within the Army. The vision statement positions PEO STRI as “the Center of Acquisition Excellence providing simulation, training and testing solutions for the Nation.”

In line with the organizational changes, PEO STRI is transitioning away from the Balanced Scorecard format to an Ends, Ways, Means strategy.

“Ends are the objectives that represent what must be achieved in order to successfully realize our mission and reach our strategic destination,” Giunta said. “Ways are the strategic initiatives and the methods the organization will use to achieve the Ends.”

For example, Means are the resources required to achieve the Ends such as people, funding, facilities, tools and technology.

“Additionally, senior leadership revised and consolidated several of the strategic objectives on the Balanced Scorecard. This was done to focus on key areas necessary for the PEO

to achieve its mission,” Giunta said.

The 2008 PEO STRI Strategic Objectives, or Ends, are to provide simulation, training and testing products and services, expand beyond the traditional products and services, provide an integrated and interoperable infrastructure, and shape a world class workforce with acquisition, functional and

MISSION:

“To provide responsive interoperable simulation, training, and testing solutions and acquisition services for the Warfighters and the Nation.”

VISION:

“The Center of Acquisition Excellence providing simulation, training and testing solutions for the Nation.”

MOTTO:

“Putting the power of simulation into the hands of the Warfighters.”

leadership skills.

Furthermore, the Ends also include providing a full range of contracting and acquisition services for effective, efficient, and responsive lifecycle management, and implementing the U.S. Army’s policy for acquisition of system training devices.

Despite the changes to the organization’s strategic objectives, mission and vision, PEO STRI’s motto continues to be, “putting the power of simulation into the hands of the Warfighters!” ■



Renaissance Orlando Resort at SeaWorld

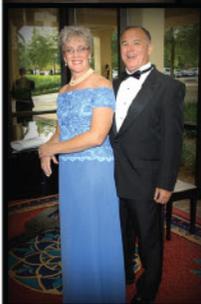
United States
Army
Birthday
Ball



U.S. ARMY

ARMY STRONG.

June 16, 2007
232 Years of Service



INTEGRATE TO OPERATE: THE NEW WAY FORWARD

By Kristen Dooley, PEO STRI Public Affairs Specialist

The Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI) established a new leadership body to ensure the organization's programmatic and technical functions align with the recently-amended mission statement.

"This is a cultural change for the PEO," said Joe A. Giunta, the strategic integrator for PEO STRI. "It's an internal forum that will define the practices and procedures needed to accomplish our new vision and mission statements."

As such, the Integration and Interoperability Advisor Board (I2AB) will oversee the fulfillment of PEO STRI's undertaking to "provide responsive interoperable simulation, training, and testing solutions and acquisition services for the Warfighters and the Nation."

The I2AB charter, which formally consolidated the former Enterprise Architecture Steering Committee and the Program Management Board, was approved by the Board of Directors and signed by Dr. James T. Blake June 11.

The I2AB will facilitate the integration and interoperability of the PEO's programs and systems through a technical and programmatic perspective to best support the Warfighter.

In order to effectively integrate the live, virtual and constructive domains, the organization has turned to the Department of the Army for additional funding.

"The Department of the Army has endorsed the Board, so we will receive funds to procure manpower," Giunta

said. "Our existing workforce is busy accomplishing the mission. The new staff will execute the live, virtual and constructive integration."

Although the interoperability of training devices will be executed by new personnel,

the I2AB will be guided by existing members of the staff including the deputy project managers and the chief systems engineer. Dr. Roger Smith, PEO STRI's chief technology officer and I2AB advisor, will provide long-range technology insight to the Board. ■

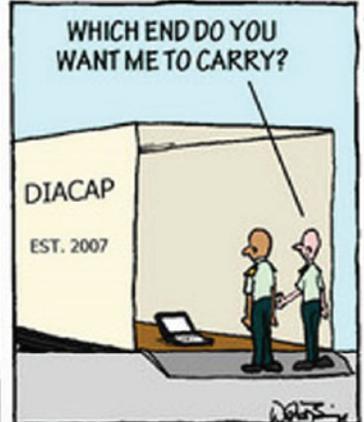
BACK TO SCHOOL



Credit: U.S. Army Photo/Staff Sgt. Marcus J. Quarterman

Gen. Dan McNeil congratulates U.S. and Afghan Soldiers who made it safe for the children to return to school.

ON CYBER PATROL



As covered or mandated by AR 25-2

A1025



Senate Names Pete Geren 20th Secretary of the Army

By Army News Service

The Honorable Pete Geren became the 20th Secretary of the Army Friday, following his nomination by President George W. Bush and confirmation by the U.S. Senate.

As Secretary of the Army, Sec. Geren has a statutory responsibility for all matters relating to the U.S. Army: manpower, personnel, reserve affairs, installations, environmental issues, weapons systems and equipment acquisition, communications and financial management.

Sec. Geren is responsible for the Department of the Army's annual budget and supplemental of \$170 billion. He leads a workforce of more than one million active-duty and reserve-component Soldiers, 230,000 Department of the Army civilian employees and 280,000 contracted service

personnel. He has stewardship over 15 million acres of land.

Caring for Soldiers and their families has been Sec. Geren's top priority since his days serving as the 28th Under Secretary of the Army. In an opening statement during his confirmation hearing last month, he reaffirmed that commitment.

"My year as Under Secretary of the Army taught me much; my four months as Acting Secretary of the Army taught me much more," he said. "I have been inspired by the selfless service of our Soldiers, and humbled by the sacrifice of their families."

Sec. Geren was the Under Secretary of the Army until Feb. 21, 2006. He was named Acting Secretary of the Army March 9.

Sec. Geren joined the Defense Department in September of 2001 to serve as Spe-

cial Assistant to the Secretary of Defense with responsibilities in the areas of inter-agency initiatives, legislative affairs and special projects. He also served as Acting Secretary of the Air Force from July 2005 to November 2005.

Before joining the Defense Department, Sec. Geren was an attorney and businessman in Fort Worth, Texas.

From 1989 until his retirement in 1997, Sec. Geren was a member of the U.S. Congress, representing the 12th Congressional District of Texas for four terms. He served on the Armed Services, Science & Technology and the Public Works and Transportation Committee during his tenure in the Congress. ■

Beach Homes for the Brave Program Kicks-Off in Florida

By Pfc. David S. Choi, U.S. CENTCOM Public Affairs

Just off the southwest coast of Florida, big things are happening on the private, secluded beach of Palm Island.

"Beach Homes for the Brave," a new program for military veterans and those wounded while serving in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom kicked off its inaugural event last weekend. This program provides the war veterans with a complimentary weekend getaway to Palm Island.

David and Holly Haynes, who own and operate Tarpon Realty Co. in Placida, Fla., decided to start the program to provide wounded service members with the opportunity to enjoy a stay on Palm Island.

"We wanted to personally offer something and say 'thank you,'" said Mr. Haynes.

The program includes free ferry transportation to the island, lodging in a fully furnished beachfront home, meals at the Palm Island Resort's Rum Bay Restaurant, complimentary golf carts and other resort-like privileges on the island.

After some deliberation, the couple decided to use their background as a means to show

their gratitude to the wounded service members.

E-mailing dozens of beach home owners, the Haynes asked if they would like to offer their beachfront homes to the service members and their families.

"The responses were overwhelming," said Mr. Haynes. "About 50 owners donated their homes."

Not only did homeowners express interest, but other local businesses jumped at the chance to participate in the program.

"They were all thrilled to participate and donate these services," said Ms. Haynes with a smile.

With the donations pouring in, the Haynes contacted Director of Army Public Affairs-Southeast, Army Sgt. Maj. Steve Valley. "This program was all about civilians wanting to do something for the war veterans," Sgt. Maj. Valley said. "Once everyone understood the full program, it was approved in a matter of days."

"This is strictly a recognition program for the service members that have served in Iraq and Afghanistan," Sgt. Maj. Valley continued. "We're just at the beginning, but this program

has nowhere to go but up."

For service members who endured stressful conditions in combat zones, this ideal location provides the much needed opportunity to unwind with their friends and families.

Army Staff Sgt. Lee Jones, a wounded veteran being treated at the James A. Haley Veteran's Administration Medical Center in Tampa, Fla., was the first service member selected for the service-wide program. "I brought my family and friends with me for this vacation. It's just been awesome and it really means a lot to me," said Staff Sgt. Jones.

Lt. Col. Michael Kiser, who helped approve the program, said: "This is a great program that I really wanted to get involved in."

"We plan on expanding this program out to different areas," said Lt. Col. Kiser. "This is a story about great Americans, service members and civilians alike, showing their appreciation, love and concern for the war veterans." ■



GRILLING? KEEP IT ENJOYABLE

By Lori Yerdon, U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center

With 81 percent of all U.S. households owning a charcoal, electric or gas grill, practicing common sense and adhering to safe barbecuing practices will reduce the chance of serious injury while grilling.

According to the Hearth, Patio and Barbecue Association (HPBA), 60 percent of grill owners use their grills year-round with 47 percent grilling at least one to two times per week during peak summer months. The most popular grilling occasions are the Fourth of July, Memorial Day and Labor Day, but an increasing number of grillers report using their grills during the winter too.

“Being responsible with grills, especially around children, is

important,” said Deidra Darsa, public relations and media relations manager for HPBA. “Always read the owners manual before using your grill and follow specific usage, assembly and safety procedures.”

Everyone must realize that when people are grilling, they’re working with fire and there’s always a chance of getting burned, added Darsa.

In May, while trying to light a grill, a Soldier was burned on his face and arms. He used an excessive amount of lighter fluid on some charcoal then closed the grill cover. When the Soldier attempted to light the grill a few moments later, it exploded resulting in first and second degree burns.

“Grilling-related accidents send numerous individuals to emergency rooms each year,” said Col. John Campbell, command surgeon for the U.S. Army Combat Readiness Center.

“By understanding safe techniques and precautions, the number can be drastically reduced.”

“Soldiers, their family members and friends should always exercise caution when grilling,” said Campbell. “Don’t let your safety guard down...enjoy, but stay safe.”

Visit www.hpba.org and www.fsis.usda.gov for a more information on grilling safety. For more information on the 101 Critical Days of Summer safety campaign, visit <https://crc.army.mil>. ■

THE HPBA OFFERS THE FOLLOWING SAFETY TIPS TO HELP KEEP GRILLING A SAFE AND ENJOYABLE EXPERIENCE:

- Use barbecue grills outdoors only. Never barbecue in a trailer, tent, house, garage or any enclosed area because carbon monoxide may accumulate and cause a fatal injury.
- Ensure that grills are in an open area that is away from buildings, overhead combustible surfaces, dry leaves or brush.
- Use barbecue utensils with long handles, forks, tongs, etc., to avoid burns and splatters.
- Wear clothing that does not have hanging shirt tails, frills or apron strings that can catch fire, and use flame-retardant mitts when adjusting hot vents.
- Use baking soda to control a grease fire and have a fire extinguisher handy. Never leave a grill unattended once lit.
- Use grill pads or splatter mats, which are naturally heat resistant and usually made of lightweight composite cement or plastic; they will protect decks or patios from any grease that misses the drip pan.
- Don’t allow anyone to conduct activity near the grill when in use or immediately following its use. The grill body remains hot up to an hour after being used.
- Never attempt to move a hot grill. It’s easy to stumble or drop it.



TIME & ATTENDANCE FOR CIVILIAN EMPLOYEES

By Kristen Dooley, *Public Affairs Specialist*

The Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation's (PEO STRI) Business Operations Office recently released a revised Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) on work schedules, overtime and compensatory time off.

According to the SOP, "PEO STRI is committed to providing work schedules that encourage employees to perform their best in meeting the mission. Schedules, flexible scheduling, compensation and leave are all in accordance with appropriate laws and regulations and shall be used to promote a work environment in which mission needs are paramount."

PEO STRI civilians' default work schedule begins at 7:30 a.m. and ends at 4:15 p.m. The schedule consists of an eight hour workday with a 45-minute lunch break Monday through Friday. Employees are not permitted to skip lunch in order to leave work early. Additionally, breaks should never exceed one hour.

Civilians may alter the default work schedule with a supervisor's authorization as long as their tour of duty starts between 6:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. and ends between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. The time-keeping system restricts arrival and departure times to 15-minute intervals. All government employees must be available for duty during the core hours, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., except for the time allotted for a lunch break.

In order to change one's tour of duty, he or she must complete the Request for Work Schedule Change form and receive supervisory authorization. That work schedule will stay in effect until the employee submits a subsequent form or it is amended by his or her supervisor.

Under PEO STRI's flexible work schedule, employees may earn a maximum of 24 credit hours on an irregular basis. For example, an employee may work two extra hours on Monday so that he can leave two hours early on Tuesday for a doctor's appointment.

Credit hours are not intended to be earned or used on a frequent and reoccurring basis. No more than two credit hours can be acquired in one day and they cannot be earned while on temporary duty status or during work-related training.

Employees must receive their supervisors' approval, verbally or in writing, before credit hours can be worked so that the supervisors can ensure there is enough work to be per-

formed during the requested credit hour(s). The employee must mark this time on his or her attendance record.

When an employee is experiencing an increased workload, he or she will get compensated in one of two ways: overtime or compensatory time off. Supervisors are responsible to choose which method is most applicable after considering the employee's workload, use or lose leave status, compensatory time and credit hour balances.

All employees needing overtime or compensatory time must obtain supervisory approval before the work is performed unless an emergency or mission critical situation arises. A supervisor cannot direct an employee to work without compensation.

If compensatory time is granted, employees receive credit that is carried on the Civilian Leave and Earnings Statement and is used in place of leave. Compensatory time converts to paid overtime after 26 pay periods.

The same time-keeping rules and procedures established for normal duty hours exist while an employee is on travel and temporary duty status. An employee should account for compensatory time for travel when he or she is traveling between the official duty station and a temporary duty station, or between two temporary duty stations, and the usual waiting time that precedes or interrupts such travel. Meal periods and free time are not included in the compensatory time.

The time the employee would have spent in normal home-to-work and work-to-home commuting is not included in the compensatory time. Orlando International Airport and Huntsville International Airport are considered within the work-to-home distance for Orlando- and Huntsville-based PEO STRI employees.

Compensatory time for travel must be used within the 26 pay periods after the one in which it was earned or the time must be forfeited. To schedule the use of compensatory time for travel, employees should follow the procedure to schedule the use of annual leave, however they will not, for any reason, receive compensation for unused compensatory time for travel.

For more information on PEO STRI's time and attendance, reference SOP 22 A located on the internal website and click the "References" tab. ■

Important Terms Defined

- **Compensatory Time Off.** *Irregular or occasional overtime hours worked in which an employee receives time off from his or her tour of duty in lieu of payment; also known as comp time.*
- **Compensatory Time Off for Travel.** *Compensatory time off that is earned by an employee for time spent in travel status away from the employee's official duty station.*
- **Credit hours.** *The hours within a flexible work schedule that an employee requests to work in excess of his or her basic work requirement one day to shorten the length of another workday.*
- **Overtime.** *Approved hours of work in excess of eight hours in a day or 40 hours in a week that are officially ordered in advance for which employees receive the overtime rate of compensation.*



Military, Industry Team Up

By Kristen Dooley, PEO STRI Public Affairs Specialist

The annual Training and Simulation Industry Symposium (TSIS) held in Orlando, Fla., enables the Central Florida-based military agencies to solicit upcoming business opportunities to modeling, simulation and training-centric defense contractors.

Hosted by the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) in collaboration with the Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force's simulation and training installations, this year's event, held June 12-14, attracted approximately 400 attendees including military leaders, government civilians and industry personnel.

The U.S Army's Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI) held the first long-range planning symposium more than 10 years ago, then known as the Advanced Planning Briefing to Industry, to help the defense contractors better understand the organization's development and acquisition vision, goals and objectives to provide the best support to Warfighters.

During TSIS this year, PEO STRI's more comprehensive mission, increased workload and highly-certified workforce were very apparent.

Now, the 1,100-personnel team executes a budget of more than \$2 billion, manages \$7.6 in Department of Army contracts and oversees more than 334,000 training devices worldwide. PEO STRI

houses the Army's acquisition center of excellence and provides lifecycle management of interoperable training and simulation solutions for Soldier readiness and the defense community.

Claude M. Bolton, assistant secretary of the Army for acquisition, logistics and technology, gave the organization enhanced acquisition authority in

December 2006 to acquire all trainers and simulators for the Army. In February 2006, Bolton granted PEO STRI the head of contracting activity for the Army's simulation, training and instrumentation programs.

"Our increased authority will enable us to remain the Army's leader in providing simulation and training technology. As such, we are expanding our organization to provide unparalleled support to the

which 31 have been awarded.

"There is a good possibility that you in this room will walk out with a contract. We're projected to be a \$3 billion organization by 2011. Right now, we are right on track as our budget will reach \$2.2 billion by the end of this fiscal year," said Pete Marion, customer support executive for PEO STRI.

Among the 75 opportunities solicited this year by the Army, the most lucrative prospect was valued at \$150 million from the intelligence community requesting innovative training capabilities.

Other highly-profitable petitions included biological, radiological and nuclear detection technologies, additional reconfigurable vehicle simulators for the Close Combat Tactical Trainer, and increased interoperability of live, virtual and constructive training capabilities through the Synthetic Core Environment program. Each are valued around \$100 million.

PEO STRI's industry partners find immense value in attending TSIS annually. "The interaction and knowledge industry gained from the briefings provided by the Services allows those of us in industry to better prepare ourselves to bid on future opportunities and offer the government the best solution we can provide," said De Voorhees, Jr., Computer Science Corporation's director of training and simulation programs and Central Florida NDIA's executive vice president.

"Timely information, like that provided at the symposium, allows industry to build our bid and proposal budgets and forge better teams to address the requirements in the Request for Proposals that are sent out," Voorhees said. ■

The poster features a grid of six illustrations: a sailor saluting, a pilot in a cockpit, a person at a computer terminal, a soldier in full combat gear, a person in a control room, and a soldier in a helmet with night vision. Logos for NAWC and TSa are also present. The text reads: "Training & Simulation Industry Symposium", "ROSEN CENTRE HOTEL, ORLANDO FLORIDA", and "June 12-14, 2007".

Warfighter. To effectively execute our mission, we must collaborate with our industry partners," said James T. Blake, program executive officer for PEO STRI.

With increased responsibilities, PEO STRI's senior leadership ensured their industry counterparts continued accountability. Last year, 39 business opportunities were presented at TSIS, of



DOES IT AFFECT MY SECURITY CLEARANCE IF...?

This is the second of a two part series that addresses situations and events many of us encounter in our daily lives. This article serves to remind us that some of these occasions might obligate us to make a voluntary self-report of our experience to the Security Office.

By Bill Osborne & Donnette Hart, PEO STRI Security Office

In last month's newsletter we learned that information that must be self-reported is not always derogatory in nature. Changes in personal status, foreign travel and foreign contacts have to be reported to the Security Office but do not adversely affect your clearance status. However, we must remember an equally important element of the program. We are obligated to report potentially derogatory information, which could adversely affect our clearances.

A key condition of your employment at PEO STRI is your ability to maintain a security clearance. Your clearance was granted because you were found to be honest, trustworthy and reliable after information in your background investigation was reviewed by a security clearance adjudicator. We are all expected to be able to recognize and avoid personal behavior that could render us ineligible to work in a position of trust. Sometimes we must face potentially derogatory circumstances and be able to cope with them accordingly.

While disclosing embarrassing information about yourself to the Security Office may be the last thing you want to do, it's critical that you understand why it's one of the first things you have to do. It's all about your integrity and mitigating risk to national security interests.

Once reported to the Security Office, adverse information is forwarded to the Army Central Clearance Facility (CCF) through the PEO. On occasion the PEO may find it necessary to suspend an employee's security clearance before the information is forwarded to CCF. Sometimes CCF will suspend access upon being notified, or depending on the circumstances, CCF could opt to continue a person's access while an investigation is conducted and the case is adjudicated. (Each one of those alternatives has happened to PEO STRI employees.)

Adverse information is not likely to disappear on its own and will almost certainly surface during your next periodic reinvestigation. A decision to not self-report potentially adverse information could

lead others to question your integrity and raise more of a concern than the adverse information itself. The decision to not self-report adverse information could be the deciding factor as to whether or not a person should be allowed to retain their clearance.

Financial (adverse) issue cases commonly include such things as bankruptcy, unpaid or late bills, repossessions and/or wage garnishments. Each case is different. It's likely a security clearance will be suspended if financial irresponsibility is suspected. If the financial difficulty was caused by circumstances beyond an employee's control such as a failed business venture or serious illness of a family member, it's possible the employee might be allowed to retain his clearance while working through the resolution of the adverse financial issue.

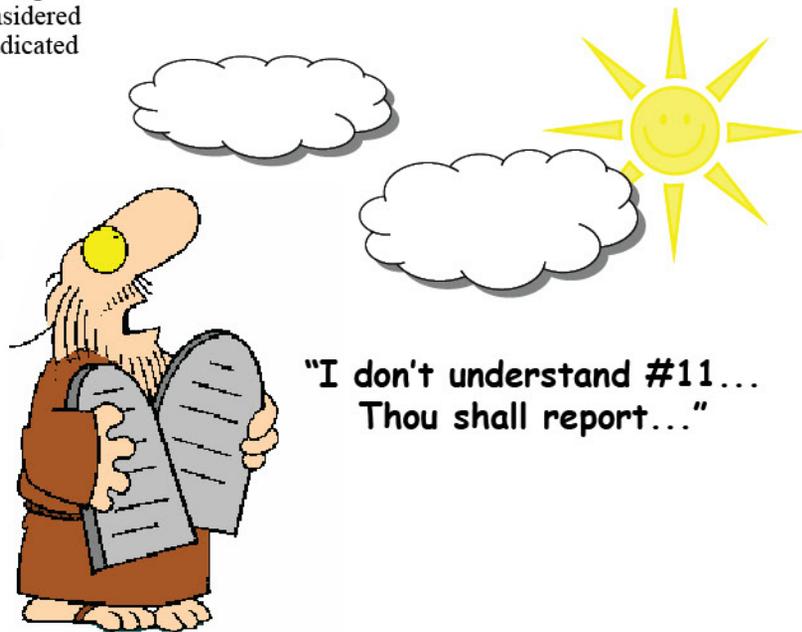
Alcohol issue cases are common. Arrests involving alcohol consumption, such as DUI, must be reported. Also, if an individual seeks counseling for alcoholism or for problems related to alcohol consumption, they should self-report. Quite often, the act of seeking treatment is considered a mitigating factor and is certainly considered when a case is adjudicated by CCF.

Some areas of concern, while less common, must still be reported. Ownership of foreign property or substantial foreign investments should be reported. Some psychiatric treatment or counseling could be considered reportable. Grief counseling, family or marriage counseling would not be

reported unless related to violence by the person with the clearance. All arrests, allegations of criminal conduct, jail sentences, traffic tickets or fines in excess of \$150.00 must be reported. The illegal use of drugs is reason for automatic revocation of a security clearance, to include the use of prescriptions drugs without a prescription.

We have discussed how many of life's factors can influence your ability to receive and maintain a security clearance. This article does not contain an all inclusive list of factors. Please remember every circumstance is unique and each case is evaluated on its own merits. All cases are fully investigated and all information must be considered and assessed before a final determination is made by CCF adjudicators.

The ultimate responsibility for maintaining continued eligibility for a security clearance and position of trust rests with each of us. If you have any questions regarding whether you should submit a self-report, simply call or stop by the Security Office. ■



**"I don't understand #11...
Thou shall report..."**





What's best about being an American?



The best thing about being an American is being able to enjoy all the freedoms that America has to offer. I enjoy the ability to make a choice so that my future becomes a landscape of my own choosing and with the help of God, plan my own destiny.

*-Barry Hatchett
PM ITTS Targets Management Office*

The best thing about being an American is that you can publicly state your opinions and not have to worry about you and/or your family being pulled from your beds in the middle of the night. It means supporting our troops even if you don't believe in the cause. It means being free to explore all possibilities and choosing the path that you'll take. It means taking responsibility for your errors and facing a jury of your peers. It means that you can choose your god or deity, or choose to not have one. It means you are part of a country where individual liberty is held above the arbitrary power of government."

*-Gino Fragoneri
PM CATT*



"The best thing about being an American is being able to feel the freedom of speech and liberty that this wonderful country has. It is amazing how this country is able to unify people from all over the world with different cultures and different idiosyncratic personalities and melt them together to form a big Nation. I'm really proud to be an American!"

*- Dayana Garcia
CSG*

Want your opinion heard? Answer August's Question!
What do you like most about working for PEO STRI?
Send your response to kristen.dooley@us.army.mil and put Citizen STRI in the subject line.

U.S. Army Photos/Doug Schaub

HOLIDAYS Events

July 20

PM WTI Change of Charter

July 24-26

I/ITSEC Paper Review

July 31

PM TRADE Change of Charter

August 3

Colors (All Military)

Protocol TIP OF THE MONTH

By Marge Hadbavny, Protocol Officer

July is National Cell Phone Courtesy Month

Follow these steps to avoid offending others while using your cell phone:

Be all there. At meetings, let calls go to voicemail.

Keep it private. Be aware of your surroundings and avoid discussing private or confidential information in public.

Keep your cool. Don't display anger during a call.

Avoid "cell yell." Remember to use your regular conversational tone when speaking on your wireless phone.

Follow the rules. Some places, such as hospitals or airplanes, restrict or prohibit the use of cell phones.

Send a message. Use text messaging to send and receive messages without saying a single word.

Focus on driving. Practice wireless responsibility while driving.

Spread the word. Discuss cell phone manners with friends and family members.

Source: Jacqueline Whitmore, www.etiquetteexpert.com.



LEGAL CORNER



How to Make More Out of Your Savings

By Laura Cushler, *Associate Counsel*

Are you tired of the sad little yields you have been getting from your savings account? Many traditional savings accounts offer low annual percentage yields in the 0.2 percent to 0.5 percent range, and traditional money market savings accounts tend to be only slightly better.

One way to counteract this punishing trend is to put money into online savings and money market accounts, many of which are paying rates between four percent and five percent or even higher. Of course, if you will not need to use the money for six months or a year, there is always the option of purchasing a certificate of deposit at your local bank or credit union. However, if you would rather have access to the money, the following tips can help you figure out where to stash your cash and keep your savings safe at the same time.

1. Know where to investigate. Go to Bankrate.com and click on the “Checking & Savings” tab. Next click on the line “Checking and Savings Accounts: Compare Rates.” You can choose checking alone or savings accounts that will result in both savings and money market account listings. This will yield a list of banks across the country that have the best interest rates on liquid accounts.

2. Check the safety rating. Some banks offer unusually high yields because they are trying to drum up business and increase deposits. To make sure you are dealing with a financial institution that is not too shaky, check the number of stars in the “Safe & Sound” rating. (One star is the lowest rating; five stars means “superior.”)

3. Look for government-backed insurance. Opt for an institution that is insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp. (FDIC) or the National Credit Union Share Insurance Fund (NCUSIF). That means up to \$100,000 of the money you deposit will be insured by the federal government. Look carefully at the bank or credit union’s website to verify that it is insured, since a mere “FDIC” symbol is no guarantee. Often the “FAQ” portion of the site will go into more detail.

4. Understand how it works. Online banks and bank divisions save millions on operating expenses because they do not have “brick and mortar” branches to maintain. They are able to pass that savings on to customers in the form of higher yields on deposits.



5. Don't be duped. Online divisions of well-known banks should be federally insured, but it is still a good idea to check. Some sneaky copycat sites look and feel similar to the sites of real banks, so examine the bank’s name carefully and make sure it is legitimate with headquarters based at a real, verifiable address.

6. Prepare to link up to your checking account. If you open an online savings or money market account, you will not need to cancel or close your existing accounts at your current bank. In fact, the online entity most likely will want to link your new account to your existing checking account so you can transfer money back and forth with ease.

7. Don't get too hung up on precise rates. You could spend a lot of time and energy hunting down an interest rate that is, say, 0.03 percent higher than another rate, but that will not make a huge difference in your overall yield. Just try to get a big enough rate bump that you are losing less money to inflation every year. Here is one rate-related detail that really does matter, though: Make sure you are not seduced by a high teaser rate that will plummet in three months or so. The idea is to keep the higher yields rolling in month after month.

8. Examine the fees. Some online accounts require high minimum balances to avoid monthly fees. Be certain you will be able to deposit enough money – and keep enough money in your account – to avoid those fees. Also, check to see whether you will be hit with fees when you make deposits at a brick-and-mortar bank branch or use an ATM card to withdraw cash.

9. Choose challenging passwords. When selecting passwords for your online accounts, avoid obvious ones such as your mother’s maiden name, your date of birth, the last four digits of your Social Security number or a series of consecutive numbers. Opt for a hard-to-guess combination of letters and numbers.

10. Be a savvy computer user. Update your virus protection software regularly, do not download files or click on hyperlinks sent to you by people you do not know, use a firewall program and use a secure browser for online transactions. Also, avoid storing financial information on your laptop because they are much too easy to steal. ■

TEAM ORLANDO IN PICTURES



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

Lt. Col. Jim Dykes, project director for Deployable Urban Operations Training Systems, retired from the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation June 22.



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

Shirley C. Rubens handed over the Product Manager for Digitized Training charter to Lt. Col. Charles J. Emerson June 26. Rubens retired from the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation June 28.



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

Lt. Col. Mike E. Zarbo (left) handed the Product Manager for Combat Training Instrumentation Systems charter over to Lt. Col. Aaron M. Brown (right) June 29 in a ceremony presided over by Col. James Ralph (center). Upon leaving the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation, Zarbo will attend the U.S. Army War College in Carlisle Barracks, Pa.



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

Webster University conferred MBA degrees June 29 to all 13 Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation employees who successfully completed the Professional Development Program.

Introducing
LTC Mike Zarbo
 the
PEO STRI
 Employee Spotlight



U.S. Army Photo/Doug Schaub

By Kristen Dooley, PEO STRI Public Affairs Specialist

Lt. Col. Mike Zarbo, the former Product Manager for Combat Training Instrumentation Systems (PM CTIS), recently left the Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation (PEO STRI) to attend the U.S. Army War College.

“Of no fault of our own, I think that sometimes, plugging away at the level we do, we tend to see things from the bottom-up point-of-view and often lose sight of how the things operate in a larger context. I’m hoping that school opens my eyes to this new perspective,” Zarbo said.

Maj. Gen. David H. Huntoon, Jr., commandant of the Army War College, stated the institution intends to do just that. “For more than a century, the U.S. Army War College has prepared senior military officers and civilians for strategic-leadership responsibilities.”

“Today, we play a major role in developing dedicated, intelligent, and competent men and women who will go on to serve our nation in positions of great responsibility. Senior military, civilian, and international leaders come to study and confer on the strategic application of landpower,” he said.

Zarbo said he looks forward to studying a curriculum that offers a strategic view of the world. Furthermore, he said he looks forward to the opportunity to study among many men and women who have just returned from combat or will be deploying to theater after the War College.

“I’m fairly certain that conversations concerning the more complex issues on Iraq and Afghanistan won’t be lacking from both a global military and political point-of-view. What I hope to gain there is a new and constantly evolving view of national defense, military and political issues,” Zarbo said.

Just as Zarbo said he intends to gain a multitude of knowledge from his peers who recently returned from theater, he will be able to bring an entirely different perspective to the classroom—the acquisition experience gained from his work at PEO STRI.

PM CTIS provides the lifecycle management

of the instrumentation systems at the Combat Training Centers. These Centers rely heavily on instrumentation to collect, analyze and disseminate training data to critique the units training. This critique, better known as an After Action Review, is critical to helping Soldiers understand their individual and collective strengths and weaknesses prior to deploying to combat.

“Our product line is extensive as is, but we recently expanded our mission to include homestation instrumentation systems largely because of the similarities between the two systems. It also makes PM CTIS a more efficient organization,” Zarbo asserted.

Zarbo attributes the success of PM CTIS to its workforce even in the midst of the inherent fiscal uncertainty war brings and a fairly dramatic shift in personnel due to promotions, transfers and retirements.

“I’m proud of how flexible and adaptive the team became as we continuously responded to ‘what if’ queries from higher Department of the Army organizations. We now have the right folks in the right places doing the right things,” Zarbo said. “I’m really proud of the team we have.”

Zarbo describes his experience at PEO STRI “very rewarding.” “As an Army guy, it’s a great place to be assigned. This is my second ‘tour’ here and I hope history will repeat itself once again and I’ll have the opportunity to return in the future.”

Outside of his professional life, Zarbo said he enjoys spending time with his wife and kids. “I can have a really difficult day at the office and come home and my kids will say something that quickly lightens me up and makes me laugh. For example, last week my daughter—who seems to ask a thousand questions a day—asked my wife if we get separate air conditioning bills for the house and for the cars!”

“My goals haven’t changed in a quarter of a century and that’s to be the best Soldier, husband, father and citizen I can be...really,” Zarbo affirmed. ■

Hails and Farewells

Hails

Helen Garcia	Contracts
Emilce Hessler	Contracts
Gino Fragomeni	PSG
John Nguyenduc	PSG
Dayana Garcia	CSG
Holley Wheeler	CSG
David Light	Contracts
Barry Hatchett	PM ITTS
LTC Charles Emerson	PM TRADE
LTC Keith Flail	PM ConSim
LTC Aaron Brown	PM TRADE

Farewells

Vanessa Dobson	Contracts
Nikia Jelks	Contracts
Debra Leuschel	Contracts
Shirley Rubens	PM TRADE
LTC Russ Hinds	PM CATT
LTC Craig Carson	PM ConSim
LTC Mike Zarbo	PM TRADE
LTC Jim Dykes	PM TRADE
LTC Jeff Sponsler	PM ConSim



INSIDE PEO STRI

Inside STRI is an authorized publication for military and civilian members of the U.S. Army Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training and Instrumentation, Orlando, Fla. 32826. Inside STRI is published under the authority of AR 360-1 and applies the Associated Press Stylebook industry standard.

Contents of Inside STRI are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, or PEO STRI.

Editorial material for publication should be submitted to PEO STRI Public Affairs Office, 12350 Research Parkway, Orlando, Fla. 32826. The PAO reserves the right to edit all material submitted for publication.

For more information about PEO STRI or to view Inside STRI online, visit our Web site at www.peostri.army.mil

Editors:
Kristen Dooley
 Editor-in-Chief
Kristen.dooley@us.army.mil

Layout and Design:
 Angel Starr & David McWhertor/DFC
angel.starr@us.army.mil
david.mcwhertor@us.army.mil